

HEALTHY AGING IN RURAL AMERICA

HEARING
before the
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING
UNITED STATES SENATE

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The Chairman. We have been joined by Senator Carper. He does not have an opening statement. We are pleased, Senator, that you could spend some time with the committee this morning.

Senator Carper. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Sykes, do you have an example of best practice that highlights the type of community partnership that you described with a combination of Federal, State, local governments, private corporations, religious groups, hospitals--and then again, in all of that, what are the greatest challenges of these kinds of collaborations, and how do we overcome those challenges?

Mr. Sykes. I am pleased to say that in many parts of our State and country, we have found ways to bring together the kinds of resources that we are talking about. I am thinking of a low-income housing tax credit project where the private sector is putting up the funds necessary to do the construction of the project; I am looking at some of the community development block grant moneys that become available for programs that are serving people in transition of one kind or another, another channel of resources. There is private fundraising, either with or around the United Way; efforts to bring those programs.

Your question had to do with best practices. I cannot look at a project across the State of Wisconsin that I have had some role in in my State Housing Finance chairmanship that does not reflect the kind of partnership of a variety of sources. Frequently, it is the donation of a piece of land that gets it started in the right place at the right time, and then come, with some careful planning, the resources to sustain it.

Terribly important to most of the lowest-income people in both rural and other parts of America is the Section 8 subsidy, a sufficient subsidy to enable somebody to pay

whomever owns or manages that property a fair market rate so that that property, that program, can be sustained.

It takes all of the above to make a good project, and we have lots of wonderful examples, whether they were begun by churches or a trade union or a rural hospital or a corporation, as in the case of the Sun Prairie story.

The Chairman. Thank you.